



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
2 NAVY ANNEX  
WASHINGTON, DC 20380-1775

MCO 1301.25B  
MPO  
3 Jun 00

MARINE CORPS ORDER 1301.25B

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps  
To: Distribution List

Subj: ASSIGNMENT OF AVIATION OFFICERS AS FORWARD AIR CONTROLLERS

Ref: (a) MCO P1300.8R  
(b) MCO P3500.14F  
(c) OPNAVINST 3710.7R

1. Purpose. To publish policy and eligibility criteria pertaining to the assignment of aviation officers as Forward Air Controllers (FACs).
2. Cancellation. MCO 1301.25A
3. Background. The FAC coordinates and controls close air and assault support missions and advises the ground commander on matters pertaining to air support. The assignment of skilled, company grade naval aviators and naval flight officers on a permanent basis is vital to the Marine Corps' Marine Air-Ground Task Force concept. The assignment of aviation officers as FACs is based on a unit's Tables of Organization and Equipment and their respective Training Exercise and Employment Plan, which details operational requirements. The intent of this order is to ensure combat arms battalion commanders are assigned the appropriate number of aviation officers to accomplish mission requirements, while maintaining the combat effectiveness of operational squadrons tasked to provide FACs.
4. Effective Date. The assignment procedures promulgated by this Order are effective 1 June 2000.
5. Information
  - a. FACs will be permanently assigned to combat arms battalions that are, at a minimum, six months from deployment. Battalions will deploy with two FACs and one Air Officer (AirO). FAC assignment priority will go to battalions in the Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) cycle.
  - b. During the post-deployment phase, FAC staffing can decrease to a single officer (AirO). The timing pertaining to the reassignment of FACs during the post-deployment phase is

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based on operational requirements, as determined by the appropriate Marine Expeditionary Force Commander, and on FAC tour lengths outlined in paragraph 8.b.

6. Eligibility Criteria

a. In accordance with reference (a), female Marine aviators will not be assigned to FAC duty.

b. FACs will be Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) school trained, and qualified for the additional Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) FAC/AirO (MOS 7502) prior to their FAC duty report dates.

c. In accordance with reference (b), company grade aviators will have served a minimum of 24 months duty in a flying status involving operational flights with a squadron, group, or wing prior to FAC assignment.

7. Action

a. Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

(1) Coordinate the nominations of aviation officers to FAC duty with Marine Expeditionary Force Commanders.

(2) Approve FAC assignments and issue Permanent Change of Station orders concurrent with receipt of nominees, provided eligibility criteria is satisfied.

(3) Schedule and assign FACs to TACP training, via temporary additional duty orders en route, prior to their respective battalion report dates.

(4) Assign aviators the additional MOS 7502 upon successful completion of the TACP course.

b. Marine Expeditionary Force Commanders

(1) In coordination with CMC (MMOA-2), direct and control the assignment of aviation officers to FAC duty ensuring deploying battalions are assigned two TACP trained FACs in addition to an AirO, at least six months prior to deployment. At a minimum, ensure one aviation officer is assigned during the battalion's post-deployment phase.

(2) Identify FAC nominees to CMC (MMOA-2) not more than six months prior to each FAC's battalion report date. The respective wing will normally fill FAC requirements. However,

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when necessary, some FAC requirements may be filled by CMC (MMOA-2) subsequent to coordination with the respective wing.

8. Administrative Instructions

a. FAC assignment orders will specify duty in a flying status; flight activity denied (DIFDEN). Further information on DIFDEN status is found in reference (c).

b. The tour length for FACs serving with Marine divisions will normally be less than 14 months and will be specified in the Marine's orders. The FAC duty tour length for active duty Marines serving as FACs with reserve commands will be 24 months. MEU Air Officers will normally serve 18 months.

c. Upon completion of duty as a FAC, an officer will be reassigned to duty involving flight operations except:

(1) Upon selection for professional military education.

(2) Upon request by the officer for duty in a DIFDEN status, if approved by CMC (MMOA).

9. Reserve Applicability. This Order is not applicable to the Marine Corps Reserve.



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